

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 06642 01 OF 02 141846Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /015 W  
-----097793 141904Z /43

R 141745Z SEP 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3682  
INFO PANCANAL  
USCINCSO

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 PANAMA 6642

DEPT FOR ARA/PAF AND PAN

USCINCSO FOR J-2 AND PAO

PANCANAL FOR IO

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SOPN, PN  
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTIONS

FOLLOWING FROM USIS/PANAMA P R 141735Z SEP 77 SENT ACTION USINFO  
WASHDC INFO SECSTATE WASHDC REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION/INFO:

QUOTE UNCLAS

SECSTATE FOR ARA/PAF & PAN

USIA FOR ILA, IBS/PL, IPS/PL

MEDIA REACTION

1. PANAMA CITY.-- CANAL TREATY: LA REPUBLICA COLUMNIST,  
MARIO AUGUSTO RODRIGUEZ, SEPTEMBER 13, SAYS " NEW TREATY  
BRINGS GREAT RESPONSIBILITIES TO PANAMANIAN AS WELL AS  
BENEFITS; RESPONSIBILITY OF ADMINISTERING CANAL IN  
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ORDERLY FASHION FOR ALL INHABITANTS AND USERS. ALTHOUGH  
TRANSITION OF 23 YEARS SEEMS LONG, WE MUST TAKE GREAT  
ADVANTAGE OF THOSE YEARS IF WE WANT TO CAREFULLY  
PREPARE AND TRAIN PERSONNEL WHICH NEW RESPONSIBILITIES  
WILL REQUIRE." RODRIGUEZ CONTINUES "IT IS EASY TO  
CRY 'OUT WITH THE GRINGOS' BUT IT IS NOT SO EASY TO  
REPLACE THEM."

2. LA ESTRELLA EDITORIAL STATES THAT MAJORITY OF AMERICANS OPPOSED TO RATIFICATION ARE STARTING OUT FROM FALSE CONVICTION THAT ZONE IS U.S. TERRITORY. THIS VIEW, CHAMPIONED BY RONALD REAGAN, IS COMPLETELY FALSE AND RAISES FEARS THAT PERHAPS TOMORROW US MIGHT BE DISPOSED TO RETURN LOUISIANA TO FRANCE AND ALASKA TO RUSSIA. "THE LATTER WERE PURCHASED BY THE US IN A COMPLETELY VALID AND CORRECT TRANSACTION." IT SHOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT FOR PRESIDENT CARTER, WITH HIS MORAL AUTHORITY TO EXPLAIN THE TRUTH AND POINT OUT THAT THESE VIEWS ARE WRONG AND THAT THE US WAS NEVER THE OWNER OF CANAL ZONE." "WHEN THIS POINT IS CLEARED UP, THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE TREATY, STARTING OUT FROM A WRONG PREMISE, WILL CHANGE THEIR MINDS."

3. CRITICA EDITORIAL PRAISES TORRIJOS' INITIATIVE TO INVITE UN SECTEN KURT WALDHEIM AND RECTORS OF ALL HEMISPHERE UNIVERSITIES TO WITNESS PLEBISCITE. "LET THEM SEE THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE FREELY DECLARING WHETHER THEY APPROVE THE TREATY OR NOT. LET THEM INFORM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY." EDITORIAL ALSO SUPPORTS TORRIJOS' EFFORTS TO IMPROVE PANAMA'S IMAGE "DAMAGED BY EXILED PANAMANIAN IN THE US WHO ARE MOVED BY PATHOLOGIC HATRED AND WHO CLAIM THAT OUR COUNTRY DENIES HUMAN RIGHTS." TORRIJOS INVITED INTERAMERICAN COMMITTEE OF UNCLASSIFIED

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HUMAN RIGHTS TO VISIT PANAMA AND LOOK INTO THIS MATTER. "WE ARE NOT PERFECT, BUT WE DO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS OF EVERYONE LIVING IN THIS COUNTRY: THE NEW TREATIES ARE A SYMBOL FOR THE ENTIRE WORLD OF OUR DESIRE TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AND INJUSTICE." EDITORIAL CONCLUDES SAYING "THIS IS OUR ANSWER TO THOSE TRAITORS AND FELONS."

4. CRITICA COLUMNIST, CAMILO PEREZ SAYS FIGHT OF PANAMAIAAN PEOPLE IS A HEROIC BATTLE WHICH HAS RECEIVED INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT, SAME AS SIMILAR BATTLES IN VIETNAM, LAOS, CAMBODIA, GUINEA BISSAU, ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE. SUCCESS OF RECENT NEGOTIATIONS WAS DUE TO INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE. "EVERYONE HERE NOW PARTICIPATES IN THE GREAT DEBATE. THERE IS NO LONGER ANY FEAR TO SPEAK OF MARX, MARCUSE, WILLIAM JAMES OR LENIN. PANAMA HAS ATTRACTED TO ITS CAUSE ALL THE DIFFERENT TENDENCIES. IN WASHINGTON, PINOCHET, VIDELA AND STOESENNER WERE PRESENT SHOWING HOW A CONTINENTAL POLICY CAN BE CREATED IN THOSE ASPECTS WHERE COINCIDENCE OF POINTS IS POSSIBLE. PANAMA WISELY DID NOT OPPOSE THE SUPPORT OF CHILE, ARGENTINA, PARAGUAY, ETC. BECAUSE EACH PRESENCE ADDS SUPPORT. THE SENATE UNDERSTANDS ONLY THE MESSAGE OF CONCRETE

FACTS AND THE ACCOUNTS OF THOSE WHO FROM WALL STREET  
DOMINATE THE ECONOMY OF THAT GREAT COUNTRY AND ALSO  
THE OTHERS, INCLUDING OURS."

5. CRITICA COLUMNIST, VICTOR FRANCESCHI PRAISES  
PRESIDENT CARTER AS A MAN COMMITTED TO MAKING GOOD HIS WORLD  
AND PERSEVERING IN HIS INTENTIONS BASED ON STRONG MORAL GROUNDS.  
CARTER, IN THE WORDS OF TORRIJOS ON SEPTEMBER 7 WHEN HE QUOTED  
LINCOLN IS "ONLY A STATESMAN WHO THINKS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS AND  
NOT IN THE NEXT ELECTIONS." "CARTER GIVES US  
CONFIDENCE, HE IS AWARE OF HISTORY AND FACES CONGRESS  
AND A LARGE SECTOR OF HIS PEOPLE TO LEAD THEM ON A  
HISTORICAL ROAD WITHOUT WHICH THIS GREAT NATION  
CANNOT FACE ITS FUTURE. EVEN IF MR. CARTER DOES NOT  
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WIN IN THIS NOBLE ENDEAVOR, LET HIM NEVER DISAPPOINT US."

6. MATUTINO EDITORIAL PRAISES PANAMANIAN PLEBISCITE,  
STATING IT IS A VERY SIMPLE AND DIRECT FORM OF TAKING  
THE PEOPLE'S PULSE. IT ELIMINATES DEMAGOGUES,  
POLITICAL PARTIES, POLITICAL MANEUVERS AND HAS ONE  
SOLE CANDIDATE: THE COUNTRY AND ONLY ONE CHOICE:  
TO APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE.

7. MATUTINO COLUMNIST LUIS RESTREPO, CRITICIZES  
REAGAN FOR SAYING THAT PANAMANIAN ARE INCAPABLE  
OF ASSUMING SERIOUS RESPONSIBILITIES OF OPERATING  
THE CANAL. "THIS IS THE VIEW OF PEOPLE WHO  
CONSIDER THEMSELVES SUPERIOR HUMAN BEINGS AND ARE  
CONVINCED THAT THEY AND ONLY THEY ARE CAPABLE OF  
DOING THINGS, AND DOING THEM WELL. THIS IS THE OLD  
THOUGHT OF MANIFEST DESTINY." RESTREPO IS  
PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF REAGAN'S VIEW THAT RUSSIA MAY  
BE TEMPTED TO TAKE OVER THE CANAL. THE RUSSIANS ARE  
ABOUT TO OPEN THE POLAR ROUTE FROM MURMANSK TO THE  
PACIFIC AND THEY WILL HARDLY BE INTERESTED IN THE  
PANAMA CANAL."

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /015 W

-----097957 141905Z /43

R 141745Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3683

INFO PANCANAL

USCINCSO

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 PANAMA 6642

DEPT FOR ARA/PAF AND PAN

USCINCSO FOR J-2 AND PAO

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8. DG W

A COLUMNIST, ADAN CASTILLO CALLS ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT CONCLUSION OF TREATY BATTLE WILL TURN PANAMANIAN ATTENTION TO DOMESTIC PROBLEMS. POINTS OUT THAT TORRIJOS' GOVERNMENT HAS MANY ACHIEVEMENTS TO ITS NAME SUCH AS FARMERS' LEAGUES, NATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION NETWORK AND AGRICULTURAL REFORM. BUT PROBLEMS ARE MORE NUMEROUS. "AGRICULTURE STILL IS A STRAIGHT JACKET FOR HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PANAMANIAN INDIANS AND OTHER FARMERS ARE ALSO IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES, MARKETING IS NOT EFFICIENT, MANY SECTORS HAVE BEEN IMPOVERISHED, HURT BY INFLATION." "NONE OF THIS HAS ESCAPED THE ACCURATE VISION OF OUR CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT. THESE PROBLEMS NOW DEMAND THE ATTENTION OF ALL."

9. MATUTINO ARTICLE COMMENTS ON SEPTEMBER 7 CANDLE LIGHT PARADE BY ZONIANS PROTESTING TREATY UNCLASSIFIED

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SIGNING. COMMENTS THAT SMALL GROUP OF SAD LOOKING PEOPLE DRESSED ALL IN BLACK, ATTACKED ITS OWN PRESIDENT AND NOT TORRIJOS IN STYLE REMINISCENT KLUX KLUX KLAN.

10. OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST: LA ESTRELLA FRONT PAGES OFFICIAL CALL FOR PANAMANIAN PLEBISCITE ON CANAL TREATY; PLAYS UP AP ARTICLE WITH HEADLINE "TREATY, ONLY ACCOMPLISHMENT OF CARTER'S FOREIGN POLICY"; GENERAL TORRIJOS WILL PARTICIPATE IN 10TH CONVENTION OF PANAMANIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS (FEP) ALONG

WITH TREATY NEGOTIATORS, TO OBTAIN SUPPORT OF  
STUDENTS FOR NEW TREATY. LA ESTRELLA FRONT PAGE ALSO  
FEATUES AP STORY WITH TITLE "IMF SAYS LATIN AMERICA  
HAS EXTERNAL DEBT OF MORE THAN SEVEN BILLION DOLLARS."  
INSIDE FRONT PAGE REPORTS DECISION BY UNESCO EXPERTS,  
TAKEN LAST WEEK IN PANAMA, TO CARRY OUT "STUDY OF  
HUMAN RIGHTS AND DISCRIMINATION IN CANAL ZONE."  
CRITICA, FRONT PAGE, HIGHLIGHTS US COUNCIL OF  
BISHOPS' DECISION TO SUPPORT CANAL TREATY, TESTIFYING IN  
FAVOR OF IT AT SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS HEARINGS AS WELL AS  
SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT ON ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS AND HUMAN  
RIGHTS." MATUTINO, FRONT PAGE,  
FEATURES TORRIJOS' LETTER TO ANDRES AGUILAR, PRESIDENT OF HUMAN  
RIGHTS COMMITTEE, INVITIN VISIT  
TO PANAMA TO INVESTIAGE HUMAN RIGHTS. ITEM UNQUOTE  
JORDEN

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## Message Attributes

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WASHDC REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTI  
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